



December 17 2010

Hon. Mike Hammah
Ministry of Transport
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The Hon. Minister of Transport
Government of Ghana
Accra

GHANA

Solidarity with the inhabitants and request to stop the evictions threatened by the railway project in Accra

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of the International Alliance of Inhabitants (IAI), an international network of social organizations (inhabitants' associations, tenants' unions, homeless and poorly sheltered people's committees, housing cooperatives and social centres, volunteers' and migrants' associations) which for many years has been committed to the defence of housing rights 'without frontiers'. Furthermore, I am member of the UN-Habitat Advisory Group on Forced Evictions (AGFE).

We write to you with concern regarding events that threaten many thousands of residents in Accra with eviction during the upgrading of the railway system.

To this purpose, we remind you that Ghana has ratified the International Covenant on Economic Social Cultural Rights (ICESCR) on 7 September 2000 which places a legal obligation upon the Ghanaian government. Under Article 11 (1) ICESCR, all authorities of Ghana are obliged to refrain from and to prevent third parties from the practice of forced evictions. In particular, the General Comments 4 and 7 prohibit evictions without an adequate and agreed relocation.

Furthermore your government committed itself in 2008 to a programme of upgrading rather than demolitions in addressing the issue of informal urban settlements.

While we recognise the need for development of infrastructure, where relocations are inevitable and, prior to carrying out such measure, you should organize a census of all persons likely to be displaced (whether with or without formal written titles), and provide such persons an opportunity of dialogue for the identification of agreed, secure and dignified alternative accommodation.



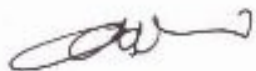
We also uphold the principles of due process and fair compensation for those affected by such development projects. To this end, we write to enquire about the processes of relocation and compensation that will be applied to these poor and marginalised communities and ask what standards will be used to determine appropriate responses that will minimise the negative impacts upon those affected.

Expressing our whole solidarity with the community, we therefore urge that your government:

- Order an immediate moratorium on the evictions and demolitions;
- Engage in full and respectful dialogue with the residents to identify a mutually acceptable process which does not further impoverish and marginalise those affected, especially women and children, in accordance with the [United Nations Comprehensive Guidelines on Development-Based Displacement](#)

Looking forward your response,

Yours sincerely



Cesare Ottolini
IAI Coordinator

cc:

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